

In one department of social life the faculty of imitation must always be reinforced by feelings of reverence. This is in the education of the young which is ultimately based upon the respect which is felt for parents and teachers. Learning it may be objected is acquired rather by obedience than by imitation. But obedience is essentially a form of imitation : it is the repetition of an impression that is received under stress of authority. Fortunately for the progress of mankind the imitative instincts of the young are not encumbered with accretions of habit and act so effectively that in a few years time the growing generation can appropriate the acquirements of many centuries. At the present day knowledge has become so extensive and so diversified that it is impossible that individuals should learn the whole of it. Teaching is specialized and particular branches of science are committed to different classes of the community. But taken as a whole each generation assimilates all that its predecessors have gained. And the boys of a village school are in possession of knowledge that lay beyond the ken of Plato and Aristotle.

When the chains of custom have once been unlocked, sympathy may assist the spread of changes instead of retarding it. This is illustrated by the vagaries of fashion which directs not merely our dress and manners, but our artistic ideas. The appreciation of mountain

scenery is a modern taste. The Romans were not an uncultured people : they crossed and recrossed the Alps. but appear only to have formed impressions of difficulty and discomfort. In Dr. Johnson's time there was little admiration for Highland landscapes.

A fashion for Greek art led the Renaissance. In modern painting and music strange tastes are arising under the fashion of the day.

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